

Schoharie County Occupancy Tax Grant Program Guidelines

MISSION STATEMENT: “The intent of this local law shall be to provide the financial resources in order to promote and enhance the general economy of Schoharie County, its towns and villages, through increased promotion of tourist related enterprises, recreational opportunities and increasing overnight stays in the County.”

The Schoharie County Occupancy Tax Grant Program is designed to support event costs, including artistic and professional fees related to an event, and to extend marketing outreach (advertising).

Monies are awarded as grants for programs/projects/events/individuals that will attract tourists (non-resident participants) to Schoharie County. Grants may not be used solely to serve residents. An application must be completed and submitted to the Schoharie County Occupancy Tax Board for review by the stated deadline. If questions arise regarding the eligibility of a specific expenditure or activity, the Schoharie County attorney is the final arbiter based upon form in legality.

Non-profit and for-profit organizations, clubs, individuals, groups, sole businesses and business consortiums in Schoharie County may apply. Note that grants cannot be used for normal operating expenses or for capital improvements not directly related to tourism.

The Schoharie County Occupancy Tax Board Members will consider two applications from one event – one application for event costs, another for event advertising/promotion. Organizations cannot apply for a grant for event costs only.

A grant award may be given for a single item (i.e. a performance fee or promotional material) or provide a major portion of the budget. In all cases, it is expected that the applicant contribute substantially to the event in terms of money, human resources and in-kind contributions. An Occupancy Tax grant may not be the sole support of a project.

EVENTS GRANT GUIDELINES

1. ELIGIBILITY

- A. Organization sponsor and event must be located in Schoharie County.
- B. Event grants are available for ADVERTISING and PROMOTIONS OUTSIDE SCHOHARIE COUNTY.
- C. Two eligibilities:
 - 1. Promotion and marketing
 - 2. Event costs, including artistic and professional fees related to an event
- D. Event grants are NOT available for the following:
 - 1. Capital expenditures

2. Promotional items to be used for resale
3. Promotional items that will be used in Schoharie County
4. Travel and Food
5. Operating expenses of facilities or organization sponsors
6. Conference or education costs
7. Staff, administrative or operating costs of the organization
8. General brochure development, printing, production

A wide range of activities are eligible for funding, from special one-day events like concerts, fairs and fireworks to weekend events like maple sugar festivals, farmers' markets and town-wide sales to permanent tourist attractions like historic guided tours, maps and signage, nature trails and outdoor "adventure activities" (hiking & biking, hunting & fishing, white water rafting, etc.) Only your imagination and the purpose of the grants (tourism) – limits the possibilities! Preference will be given to NEW events; "repeat" grant applications for annual events should incorporate new, expanded programs and activities in order to sustain eligibility.

FUNDING

The Schoharie County Board of Supervisors has made available \$23,000.00 for the 2011 Schoharie County Occupancy Tax Grant Program. The purpose of the grants is to facilitate out-of-area marketing, bringing visitors into Schoharie County – and to assist in covering the costs of tourism-related events.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

All applicants must assign one primary contact for the grant. The application must be filled out completely.

Applications must be submitted to the Schoharie County Planning, Promotion and Development Agency no later than 5 p.m. on March 31, 2011. Upon review, Schoharie County Occupancy Board Members reserve the right to interview grant applicants. Grant awards will be announced on or around April 15th of each year.

APPLICATION COMPONENTS

1. BUSINESS REFERENCES (minimum of three)

Applicants must submit three business contacts that the Schoharie County Occupancy Tax Board Members will reference for verbal support of the initiative. The application process requires that the references must include a lodging business, food service and a general business. The Schoharie County Occupancy Tax Grant Board Members will contact these references via phone to determine why that Business feels this activity is important to the Community, to Visitors, and to that Specific Business.

2. MARKETING PLAN

The applicant should submit a detailed marketing plan describing how the applicant will promote the project. “Specific” means an overall media plan detailing the total amount you’ll be spending on advertising, broken down into separate investments for TV, Radio and Print. A clear distinction must be made between marketing funded through the grant and advertising venues funded directly by the applicant. The grant will not be limited to advertising; however, the promotional plan (coupons, give-aways, posters) must detail how the money will be used. Please see item number I. ELIGIBILITY, letter D, for additional ineligible expenditures.

(Estimates)

Total Investment:	\$1000	Our Group:	\$500	OT Grant:	\$500
TV	\$ 500	TV	\$ 0	TV	\$500
Radio	\$ 250	Radio	\$250		
Print	\$ 250	Print	\$250		

In addition, the applicant requires the names of your media contacts as references. (John Doe, Central NY Radio; Jane Doe, Albany Times Union newspaper, Jim Doe, WKTV)

3. EVENT ENTERTAINMENT DESCRIPTION

Grants will be available to offset the cost of artistic and professional fees related to the event. Entertainment grants will be based on the “draw power” of the entertainment.

If this is a new event, what market segment are you trying to attract? Geographic (i.e. Albany area); A certain age group (baby boomers); A certain interest group?

Grants solely for entertainment will not be awarded.

4. VISITOR PROFILE

The Schoharie County Occupancy Tax Board Members will provide a simple form which the Grantees will use to survey a random selection of visitors. These completed forms will provide the Schoharie County Occupancy Tax Board Members with information about the audience. Applicants are asked to submit a profile of their anticipated average visitor with their marketing plan. If this is a previous event, please use last year’s survey tally to indicate who visited, where they came from, did they overnight and where (B&B, family, etc).

5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A listing of the costs related to the entire event is required.

SCORING

The scoring will be completed by the Schoharie County Occupancy Tax Board.

Scoring criteria will be based on, but not limited to, the criteria listed below: (1 to 5; with 5 being the highest rating – Up to 5 points)

Ability to result in overnight stays	5
Seasonality (Shoulder and Off-season activities are encouraged)	5
Collaboration of businesses, organizations, and individuals	5
Promotion of the entire area, as well as the event	5
Community interest, support, and benefit	5
Matching Support	4
Outreach of Marketing Plan (further the better)	4
Expected Attendance	4
New Initiative	3
Activities in existence 1 to 5 years	2
Over 5 years	1
Ability to continue the activity after Schoharie Co. Grant Program	1

GRANTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

ALL ADVERTISING AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS CREATED FOR THE PROJECT MUST BE APPROVED BY THE SCHOHARIE COUNTY OCCUPANCY TAX BOARD AND FEATURE THE SCHOHARIE COUNTY PROMOTION PHONE NUMBER (1-800-41-VISIT) AND WEBSITE (www.upstatevacations.com).

Signage for artistic and professional performances/entertainment must also include the above information.

The Schoharie County Planning and Development Agency collateral material must be available at the venues.

If an event is cancelled for any reason other than weather, the grantee must return the grant money to Schoharie County within one month of the original event date. If the event is cancelled due to weather, a rain date must be set within one month following the original event date.

FINAL REPORT

All Grant Recipients must submit the following within 90 days following the event:

1. Visitor Profiles on the individuals attending or resulting from the initiative (Survey instrument provided by the Schoharie County Occupancy Tax Board Members). Ten visitor profiles must be completed per \$200 awarded.
2. One copy of all the ads or other promotional tools placed through the grant, with copies of invoices.
3. Summary narrative detailing how the grant assisted in promoting the event.
4. Compare the final outcome of the event with initial expected outcome.
5. Any FINAL REPORT arriving late will result in a scoring penalty for the following year's grant program.
6. **THE SCHOHARIE COUNTY OCCUPANCY TAX BOARD MEMBERS ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR REMINDING APPLICANTS OF THE NEED FOR SUBMITTING REQUIRED MATERIAL (ADS AND/OR PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL AND THE FINAL REPORT).**

2011 OCCUPANCY GRANT SCORING CRITERIA

APPLICANT NAME:

EVENT NAME:

Scoring criteria will be based on, but not limited to, the criteria listed below: (1 to 5; with 5 being the highest rating 0 Up to 5 points)

CATEGORY:	UP TO:	RATING:
Ability to result in overnight stays	5	_____
Seasonality (Shoulder and Off-season events are encouraged)	5	_____
Community interest, support, and benefit	5	_____
Promotion of the entire area, as well as the event	5	_____
Collaboration of businesses, organizations, and individuals	5	_____
Matching Support	4	_____
Outreach of Marketing Plan (further the better)	4	_____
Expected Attendance	4	_____
New Event	3	_____
Event in existence 1 to 5 years	2	_____
Over 5 years	1	_____
Ability to continue the event after Schoharie Co. Grant Program	1	_____
TOTAL POINTS	44	_____

Notes pertaining to event:_____

**2011 EVENT GRANTS PROGRAM
APPLICATION**

ORGANIZATION: _____

CONTACT NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

DAY TIME PHONE: _____ FAX: _____

E-MAIL: _____

NAME OF ACTIVITY: _____

LOCATION: _____

DATE (S): _____

TOTAL COST OF PROJECT: _____

GRANT AMOUNT REQUESTED: _____

1. List three business references, including name, contact person, contact information (phone, email). – [three copies]
2. Marketing: Submit three copies of marketing plan
3. Event Entertainment Description: Submit proposed artistic/professional costs. [three copies]
4. Visitor Profile: Submit an accurate visitor profile of the average visitor. [three copies]
5. Costs: Submit a breakout of expenses related to the project, including marketing and entertainment. [three copies]
6. Submit up to one page [12 pt font] of information about the project. [three copies]
7. Expected Outcome: Submit up to two pages detailing how attended the initiative is expected to be, anticipated number of visitors that will spend the night(s) within Schoharie County. [three copies]

APPLICATIONS DUE:

MARCH 31, 2011

Submit to:

Schoharie County Occupancy Tax Grant Program
c/o Schoharie County Planning & Development
276 Main Street
Suite #2
PO Box 396
Schoharie, NY 12157